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MONTANA human RIGHTS COMMISSION

POWER BLOCK, LAST CHANCE GULCH, HELENA, MONTANA 59601 • TELEPHONE 406/449-2884

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THE HUMAN RIGHTS QUARTERLY

NO CAUSE CASES

It has become apparent since the Division began its work in 1975 that many people who have complaints filed against them, immediately panic. They assume when a case is filed that they are automatically considered guilty. The Division has always taken a non partial view of all cases filed with us. Since 1975, the Division has found NO Cause of discrimination in approximately 30% of all cases filed, a Probable Cause of discrimination in some 30% of all cases filed, and the other 40% consist of conciliation agreements, pre-determination settlements, no jurisdiction, or cases closed due to lack of cooperation on the part of the complaining parties. Therefore, it seems apparent to all those who look at the actual figures that the Division is here to serve all Montanans fairly and equally.

SEPTEMBER COMES EARLY

In our last newsletter we reported that the 5 Vista Volunteers now working for the Division would be leaving this September when the current contract runs out. Action, the agency which runs both Vista and Peace Corps, has a new policy that no state agency will be eligible for Vista Volunteers after their current contract runs out. Action is also refusing to substitute any Volunteer who terminates early.

In February one Volunteer had to leave the Division for personal reasons. Needless to say, attorney Terry Clausen's presence will be missed. His leaving will not only be missed on a professional level, but on a personal one. His leaving diminishes the legal unit to two attorneys.

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RESULTS OF E.E.O. WORKSHOP

On March 15, the Division co-sponsored a workshop on Equal Employment Opportunity Employment from a business perspective. A questionnaire on the all day workshop was handed out to all those who attended. Of a possible 100 responses, 62 people replied. To the question;

What was your overall impression of the workshop?

93% answered with remarks like, "Excellent", "Well Organized", "Very Informative".

90% responded that they would personally like to see more workshops dealing with subjects like Affirmative Action and Handicapped rights.

If you or your organization would like to have a workshop on any of these or other areas of concern, contact the Division.

STREAMLINING

Continuing in its efforts to streamline its procedures the Division has established a new full-time conciliator position. John Sinclair will be relinquishing his duties as an investigator to act as a conciliator between charging parties and respondents. Sinclair will be dealing primarily with those cases where a probable cause of discrimination has been found. The purpose of the new position is to save time and money for both parties involved. During his first week on the job, Sinclair conciliated over \$1,300.00 in settlement.

AAA

A new club, called Affirmative Action Anonymous, has been established for public and private E.E.O. officers within the state.

A professional organization which is intended to act as an information-sharing group, held its first meeting in April. The group, still in its infancy stage, has agreed to meet again on May 8th, with the location to be announced at a later date. For more information call Joyce Brown at the state's Personnel Division at 449-3871, in Helena.

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QUESTION & ANSWER

- Q. Can I use a Lie Detector Test as part of my hiring practices?
- A. According to Montana Law, you can not require that a person take a polygraph test or any form of a so called lie detector test as a precondition for employment. To do so can lead to a guilty verdict in a misdemeanor charge. This law does not cover the use of a lie detector test by public law enforcement agencies.

POOR PEOPLE'S CONFERENCE

The Montana State Low Income Organization in cooperation with the Montana Committee for the Humanities has tentatively scheduled a two day Poor People's Conference for May 20 & 21 at Capital High in Helena.

The first day will involve a series of workshops geared towards the problems and concerns of poor people. Poor people are defined as those people who lack political power, good health, or money. Topics to be discussed include services for the handicapped, energy, job security, Native American and Senior Citizen problems.

The second day will involve a panel which will discuss the issues and recommendations of those who participated in the events of the first day.

On the second day of the conference will recommend issues and topics that they will formally recommend to the 1979 state legislature.

SETTLEMENTS

In March the Division settled two cases totaling over \$4,000.00 to the complaining parties. Both cases involved sex discrimination in employment.

IN HOUSE NEWS

Almost two years an investigator with the Division, Chris Chute left us to move to Pennsylvania with her new husband, Walter P. Perry III. We at the Division wish them both the best of luck.

INFORMATION FACT SHEETS

At the request of many businesses, landlords, and educators the Division has developed information fact sheets aimed at providing information to individuals or groups in an attempt to avoid discrimination complaints.

The fact sheets, which are intended to be a preventative guide to respondent groups, provides basic information on laws and regulations which can help eliminate unlawful discriminatory practices.

The fact sheets cover Employment, Housing, Finance, Public Accommodation, and Education. The fact sheets are free and available upon request.

TEST VALIDATION

Those businesses interested in validated work sample tests for bank tellers, secretaries, and welfare workers, can contact the Jewish Educational Services (JEVS), a non-profit organization which developed these tests to comply with E.E.O.C.'s testing requirements.

Instead of testing abstract aptitudes, the work sample measures the actual job skills. For further information contact the Job Trials Research Center, JEVS at 1624 Locust Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19103.



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